



Implementation of Alternative English Language Tests for Student Visas

Frequently Asked Questions

When will the department start accepting the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic and Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) from Cambridge ESOL for Student visa purposes?

The department will be able to accept test scores from the alternative English language tests for Student visa applications for all countries lodged on or after 5 November 2011.

Will the department still be accepting the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test?

Yes. All arrangements relating to IELTS test scores remain unchanged. The TOEFL iBT, Pearson and Cambridge tests are simply alternatives to the IELTS test for Student visa purposes. Implementing these alternative tests means Student visa applicants who are required to provide evidence of their English language proficiency will be able to choose from a wider range of English language tests providers.

How will I provide the department with evidence of my English language test score?

Paper and eVisa application forms for Student visa applications have been updated to allow you to provide details about which English language test you take, and the results you received.

You must also provide the department with evidence of the test score you received. The type of evidence you provide will depend on which English language test you take. Your score will be verified by the department with the test provider.

You may be required to provide additional information to allow the department to verify your English language test score with the test provider. Please refer to each English language test provider's website to confirm whether you will also be provided with a unique identifying code. If you are provided with this code, you will need to provide it to the department. To avoid delays in processing your application, you should provide the department with evidence of your test score as soon as possible.

What are the transitional arrangements? Will the alternative English language tests apply to Student visa applications lodged before 5 November 2011?

The alternative English language tests will apply to Student visa applications:

- lodged but not decided by 5 November 2011
- lodged on or after 5 November 2011.

The *Migration Regulations 1994* state that an English language proficiency test score is valid for two years from the date of the test. If an applicant takes an English language proficiency test from one of the alternative providers before 5 November 2011 and achieves the required score, then they will be able to meet the English language requirement for their Student visa application.

What are the test score equivalencies for the new tests?

Test score equivalencies for the alternative tests are provided below:

IELTS SCORE Band	4.0	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5	8.0	8.5	9.0
Test of English as a Foreign Language internet based Test (TOEFL iBT)	31	32	35	46	60	79	94	102	110	115	118
PTE Academic	29	30	36	42	50	58	65	73	79	83	86
Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) from Cambridge ESOL test scores	32	36	41	47	52	58	67	74	80	87	93

Do these new tests apply to any other visa subclasses apart from Student visas?

No. The alternative English language tests only apply to Student visa applications at this stage. The department will be reviewing the alternative tests for use with other visa program after 12 months of operation.

How will I book a test with one of the alternative English language test providers?

You will need to contact the new English language test providers directly to book a test or seek information about each test.